

REMARKS

This amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action having a mailing date of September 19, 2007. Various claims are rewritten to independent form, amended, and canceled, as will be explained below. New claims 21-27 have been added. No new matter has been added. With this amendment, claims 4, 6-7, 9-12, 15, and 17-27 are pending in the application.

I. Allowable subject matter

The Office Action indicated that claims 4, 7, 15, and 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. The Examiner is thanked for this indication of allowable subject matter.

Accordingly, dependent claim 4 is rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim 1, with claim 1 now canceled herein without prejudice. Claims 2-3 contained recitations that are made redundant in view of the rewriting of claim 4 to independent form, and are thus canceled herein without prejudice as well. New claims 22-23 are dependent upon newly independent claim 4. In view of the rewriting of claim 4 to independent form, it is respectfully submitted that claim 4 and its dependent claims are in condition for allowance.

Dependent claim 7 is rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim 5, with claim 5 now canceled herein without prejudice. Claim 6 is amended as shown to change its dependency to newly independent claim 7 and/or to make its recitations consistent with claim 7. New claims 25-26 are dependent upon newly independent claim 7. In view of the rewriting of claim 7 to independent form, it is respectfully submitted that claim 7 and its dependent claims are in condition for allowance.

Dependent claim 15 is rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim 8, with claim 8 now canceled herein without prejudice. Claims 13-14 contained recitations that are made redundant in view of the rewriting of claim 15 to independent form, and are thus canceled herein without prejudice as well. Claims 9-12 are amended to change their dependency to newly independent claim 15 and/or to make their recitations consistent with claim 15. New claim 27 is dependent upon newly independent claim 15. In view of the rewriting of

claim 15 to independent form, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 and its dependent claims are in condition for allowance.

Dependent claim 18 is rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim 16, with claim 16 now canceled herein without prejudice. Claims 17 and 19-20 are amended to change their dependency to newly independent claim 18 and/or to make their recitations consistent with claim 18. New claim 21 is dependent upon newly independent claim 18. In view of the rewriting of claim 18 to independent form, it is respectfully submitted that claim 18 and its dependent claims are in condition for allowance.

It is kindly requested that the claims be renumbered appropriately, so that the independent claims and their respective dependent claims are numbered in sequential order and so that the claims belonging to the same claim set are grouped together in the to-be-issued patent.

Various other amendments are made to the claims as shown to provide appropriate antecedent basis, to provide consistent language within and between claims, to more precisely recite the subject matter contained therein, and/or to otherwise place such claims in better form.

II. Conclusion

The present Office Action rejected claims 5, 8-12, 16, 19, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Lennen (U.S. Patent No. 6,888,879). Claims 1-3, 6, 13, 14, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lennen in view of Kohli (U.S. Patent No. 6,574,558). In view of the rewriting of certain dependent claims to independent form as explained above and in view of amendments to the other claims, these rejections are rendered moot.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

Application No. 10/632,530
Reply to Office Action dated September 19, 2007

All of the claims remaining in the application are believed to be allowable.
Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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